

16–10. Holiday early transition program

The Christmas/New Year holiday period is established by HQDA. The specific holiday early transitioning schedule is announced in a MILPER message.

a. Soldiers may be considered for early release prior to the expiration of their terms of service in conjunction with the Christmas/New Year holiday period when specifically authorized and subject to the following criteria:

(1) Early transition normally begins on 1 December, or the first Monday thereafter, and extends to a date preceding Christmas, approximately one week, sufficient to permit the soldier adequate travel time. Soldiers whose established ETS dates fall between the first Monday in December and the announced date in January that terminates the holiday period are normally eligible for early transition.

(*a*) Holiday early release is voluntary. Soldiers who do not volunteer for early release will be required to sign a statement that they are not willing to accept separation under this paragraph.

(*b*) A soldier who declines separation in writing may subsequently change his/her mind concerning early separation under this paragraph. The separation authority, based on the circumstances of the case and the best interest of the Army, will determine if the soldier is to be retained, as previously requested, or separated.

(2) Transition leave (see AR 600–8–10) is authorized in conjunction with the holiday early release program provided the immediate commander approves. Soldiers must have an original ETS within the program dates.

(*a*) Transition leave cannot be used to place a soldier in the program.

(*b*) Soldiers with AWOL or other time to be made good who have an adjusted ETS (that is ETS adjusted for AWOL) that falls within the program dates, are eligible.

(3) Soldiers who are permanent resident aliens currently serving a 3-year enlistment who desire to fulfill naturalization requirements through military service should not volunteer for this early-transition program. (See para 4–2*b*.)

(4) The following personnel are not eligible for early release under this program:

(*a*) Reserve Component soldiers performing ADT under special training programs or serving fixed tours of active duty in support of the Army.

(*b*) Soldiers scheduled for retirement.

(*c*) Soldiers under suspension of favorable personnel actions per AR 600–8–2.

(*d*) Soldiers whose normal ETS does not fall between the first Monday in December and the date in January that terminates the holiday period.

b. Overseas commanders returning soldiers to the United States for separation under this paragraph may add normal travel time to the soldier's target early-release date to permit the orderly transition from active duty. Care will be taken to ensure that soldiers do not arrive in the United States with more than 10 days remaining in their term of service.

c. This paragraph is not to be construed as authority for early return. It authorizes early transition in conjunction with the holiday period only.

d. Combining this paragraph with other early-release programs to effect separation more than 90 days before ETS is not authorized.

e. The service of soldiers separated per this paragraph will be characterized as honorable.

Chapter 17

Instruction In Benefits of an Honorable Discharge

17–1. Purpose of instruction

a. The high rate of enlisted personnel receiving other-than-honorable discharges is a concern of commanders at all levels. The consequences of receiving an other-than-honorable discharge can have a lasting adverse effect on the individual soldier. Every effort must be made to ensure that soldiers are made aware of such consequences. This chapter prescribes a program of instruction concerning the benefits derived from receiving an honorable discharge from the Army. The program affects all active Army enlisted personnel, Reserve Component (ARNGUS), and USAR enlisted personnel on active duty 180 days or more.

b. This instruction should assist commanders in their efforts to minimize misconduct. Many soldiers gain the false impression that an unfavorable discharge can be easily recharacterized by petitioning the Army discharge review board. This is not the case, since only a small percentage of such actions have been acted upon favorably. Many soldiers can be discouraged from conduct that warrants an unfavorable discharge.

17–2. Presentation of instruction

Commanders will ensure that this instruction is presented in a manner that will create the most lasting impression on each soldier who receives it.

17–3. Contents of instruction

The instruction will include a comprehensive explanation of the following—

- a.* The types of discharge certificates.
- b.* The basis for issuance of each type of certificate.
- c.* The possible effects of the various certificates on re-enlistment, civilian employment, veterans' benefits, and related matters.
- d.* The likelihood that the soldier will be successful in any attempt to have the character of his/her discharge changed.

17-4. Time of instruction

This instruction will be given to enlisted personnel upon entry into the Service or within 60 days thereafter. It will be given again—

- a.* Upon completion of 6 months of service.
- b.* After the second article 15 (company grade) or first field grade article 15 in an enlistment.
- c.* After any court-martial in which the soldier is not discharged, first positive drug test, and so forth.

17-5. Recording

The DA Form 2-1 (Personnel Qualifications-Part II) of each individual receiving instruction in the benefits of an honorable discharge will be annotated in item 19 (Specialized Training) as follows: "UCMJ (date) and Bfts of Hon Disch (date)."

Chapter 18

Failure to Meet Body Fat Standards

18-1. Policy

Soldiers who fail to meet the body fat standards set forth in AR 600-9 are subject to involuntary separation per this chapter when such condition is the sole basis for separation.

18-2. Procedures

a. Separation proceedings may not be initiated under this chapter until the soldier has been given a reasonable opportunity to meet the body fat standards, as reflected in counseling or personnel records.

(1) Soldiers who have been diagnosed by health care personnel as having a medical condition that precludes them from participating in the Army body fat reduction program will not be separated under this chapter.

(2) If there is no underlying medical condition and a soldier enrolled in the Army Weight Control Program fails to make satisfactory progress in accordance with AR 600-9, separation proceedings will be considered.

(3) Initiation of separation proceedings is required for soldiers who fail to meet body fat standards during the 12-month period following removal from the program, provided no medical condition exists.

b. Separation action under this chapter will not be initiated against a soldier who meets the criteria for separation under other provisions of this regulation. For example, a soldier beyond entry-level status who, wholly apart from failure to meet body fat standards, is an unsatisfactory performer, will be processed for separation under the provisions of chapter 13.

c. The notification procedure (see chap 2, sec I) will be used for separation under this chapter.

d. The provisions of chapter 1, section VII, will govern whether the soldier will be released from AD with transfer to IRR or be discharged. See paragraph 1-11 for additional instructions on ARNGUS and USAR personnel.

e. The service of those separated per this chapter will be characterized as honorable, unless an uncharacterized description of service is required for soldiers in entry-level status.

f. Except as provided in paragraph 1-19f, commanders specified in paragraph 1-19 are authorized to order separation under this chapter.

Chapter 19

Qualitative Management Program

Section I

General

19-1. General

a. This chapter contains policies and procedures for voluntary and involuntary separation, for the convenience of the Government, of RA NCOs and USAR NCOs serving in AGR status, under the QMP.